

Generation Next



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Top Story

More and more 20-somethings are now finding their way into elected office in statehouses from California to Maine. And though they still lack critical mass, their impact is definitely being felt.

SNCJ Spotlight

Millennials making waves in statehouses too

Everywhere we turn these days people are talking about "Millennials," the 80 million or so children born between 1982 and 2000. Much like their parents in their own youth — primarily America's last massive generational cohort, the Baby Boomers — Millennials are proving to be a major economic, political and social force to be reckoned with. But their influence extends far beyond their value as



By Rich Ehsen

reliable consumers and a highly desired voting bloc. More and more 20-somethings are now finding their way into elected office in statehouses around the nation. And though they still lack critical mass, their impact is definitely being felt from California to Maine.

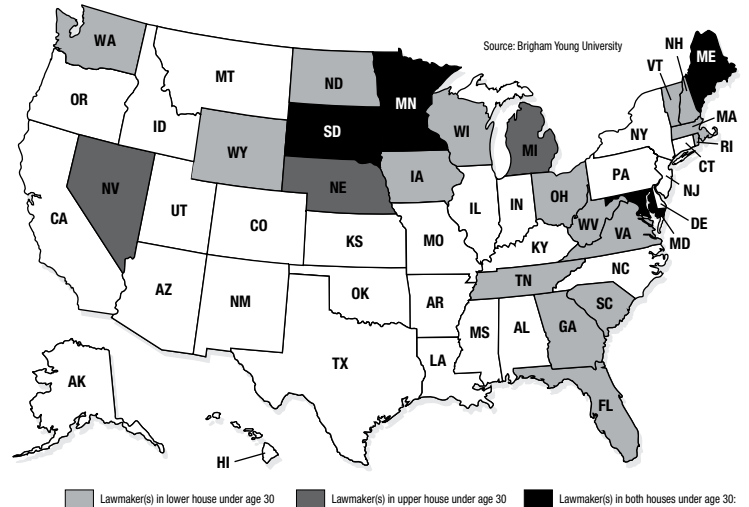
Their statehouse numbers vary greatly. In Washington, where the Legislature is quasi part-time, nine of its 147 legislators are Millennials. In California, that generational moniker applies to just three of the 120 full-time, professional lawmakers. Two, Democrats Sebastian Ridley-Thomas (26) and Ian Calderon (25) are under 30; the third, Matt Dababneh, also a Democrat, is 33. The part-time Maine Legislature, which has 186 current members, has 13 members under age 30. Those members — seven Democrats and 6 Republicans — have formed their own caucus, rightfully dubbed the Youth Caucus.

Whether this as a good thing is in the eye of the beholder. While no generalization can possibly sum up 80 million individuals, studies have shown that Millennials are typically more collegial and less caught up in partisanship than older Americans. They are more multi-cultural, with a big portion (43 percent) defining themselves as non-white, the largest percentage among the various generational cohorts. They are by most measures more liberal on social issues (same-sex marriage, abortion, immigration) than their parents and are more positive than other generations about government's role in improving society. A survey from Pew Research earlier this year, for instance, showed that almost 60 percent of all Millennials actually favor a larger government with more services over the inverse.

But while they lean toward the Democrats politically, Millennials are not moved by either party and consider themselves to be issue-centric rather than wedded to a broad party platform. Ridley-Thomas believes younger lawmakers, while hardly immune to partisanship, are right in sync with that perception.

"We *are* less hung up on those things," says Ridley-Thomas. "The old arguments don't weigh us down as heavily. We're driven by the urgency of *now*."

Bird's eye view



Nearly half of states have 'Millennial' lawmakers

As of 2011, 22 states had at least one lawmaker under the age of 30, according to Brigham Young University researcher Bryan R. Brown, PhD. In most of those states, the so-called "Millennial Generation" or "Generation Y" lawmakers only served in the lower house. But Millennials served in the upper chamber in three states, Michigan, Nevada and Nebraska, which effectively abolished its lower chamber in 1934. And they served in both chambers in four states, Maine, Maryland, Minnesota and South Dakota.



Nobody knows this generational bent better than President Barack Obama. Young voters were a driving force behind his election in 2008 and, while they did not support him quite as wholeheartedly in 2012, they were still instrumental in his re-election. How much so? As noted by Pew's Paul Taylor in *The Next America: Boomers, Millennials and the Looming Generational Showdown*, "had the [2012] election been held only among voters age 30 and over, [Republican Mitt] Romney would have won by 2 million votes instead of losing by 5 million."

But Millennials also have their detractors. Criticizing them has in fact become its own cottage industry. San Diego State psychology professor Jean M. Twenge is among the most well-known of their critics, having written two best-selling books that contend today's 20- and early 30-somethings are narcissistic slackers who have been spoiled by obsessive "helicopter parents." Millennials, she says, are entitled, financially irresponsible, obsessed with celebrity and demand being treated as equals in the workplace long before their accomplishments would command such respect. Ben Boychuck, a columnist with the *Sacramento Bee*, is even harsher, calling them

"There is a big movement afoot within this generation to prove they are not the ne'er do wells so many people accuse them of being."

"the Idiot Generation," noting their tendency to avoid not only political parties but marriage and organized religion, three of their parents' — and his — most coveted institutions. He too accuses Millennials of narcissism, calling them "more self-absorbed than any generation before them."

Most Millennials bristle at such assessments, though Maine Rep. Justin Chenette (D), 23, concedes that he does at times see the level of detachment in young people cited by their worst critics.

"Too many young people these days are more concerned with voting for the next winner of 'The Voice' or 'American Idol' than their elected leaders," he says. "We need to do more to get them engaged so we can change that."

That is exactly why so many Millennials are now getting more active in the political process, says Barbara O'Connor, the former director of the Institute for the Study of Politics and Media at California State University Sacramento.

"There is a big movement afoot within this generation to prove they are not the ne'er do wells so many people accuse them of being," she says. "They are very motivated to show in a variety of ways that they care about civic responsibilities. Running for office is one of them."

But California Assemblyman Matt Dababneh says his motivation isn't to prove detractors wrong. He believes more members of his generation are seeking office for far more important — and personal — reasons.

"Even though I'm on the younger end of the spectrum, I thought this was just a great opportunity for me to affect the issues that my generation and the generations that come after us are struggling with daily," he says. For him, that primarily means

the struggle for many young people to afford higher education, which he considers “our civil rights issue today.”

He acknowledges that some of his colleagues might at first have had questions about him based on his age, but he decided early on that the best way to counter that was to work hard, be as prepared as possible and be able to contribute in a meaningful way right from the start.

“Whether it is your age or some other defining factor, those things can create stereotypes,” he says. “I’ve worked very hard to make sure that my colleagues take me serious.”

They clearly do. In May, new Assembly Speaker Toni Atkins (D) named him Assistant Majority Whip, making him the sixth highest ranking member of his chamber. His youth is also proving more often than not to be an asset more than a liability.

“I actually have an advantage in some ways on some of the issues that are coming before us because I’m able to connect directly to the generation that is being impacted the most by these issues,” he says. “One of the biggest questions with health care, for example, is will young people sign up [for insurance through Covered California, the state’s health benefits exchange]? I have a mindset to understand why they will or will not.”

That mindset is also key for Maine Reps. Mattie Daughtry (D) and Matt Pouliot (R), both 27 and fresh off their first terms in the House, where they co-chaired the

Youth Caucus. Like Dababneh and Ridley-Thomas in California and their own Millennial colleagues in the Pine Tree State legislature, they are focused on issues of key importance to their peers.

“We are essentially demanding that our statewide policies have a more long-term view,” Daughtry says. “When I talk with other young lawmakers, we all talk about the idea that the policies we’re working on can’t be shortchanging our generation.”

As with Dababneh, much of that focus is on the skyrocketing cost of higher education and the

ensuing level of student loan debt young people are incurring. Even with degrees, the still-tepid job market is far rougher on young people, who are unemployed at about twice the rate of older workers. Even if they do find work, many young college grads can’t consider buying homes or other big ticket items for years due to their high student loan payments, and some surveys show many Millennials are even putting off marriage due to their student loan obligations.

Dababneh, who worked for California Congressman Brad Sherman for 10 years before running for office last fall, says he likely could not have followed this path if he had been faced with such a situation.

“When I talk with other young lawmakers, we all talk about the idea that the policies we’re working on can’t be shortchanging our generation.”

“I’m 10 years out of college. If I was born 10 years later, I doubt public service would have been an option for me,” he says. “I would probably have had too much debt and would have had to look for a higher income position.”

Maine Rep. Pouliot also voices strong concern over student debt. But he has deep personal experience with another major Millennial concern as well: health care. He was 25 when he ran for office. A real estate agent by profession, he was also struggling to get his own company off the ground. Fortunately for him, he won and was sworn in four days short of his 26th birthday, the cutoff under the Affordable Care Act for adult children to be on their parents’ health insurance policies.

“Had I not won, I would have lost the health insurance I had through being on that policy,” he says. “It’s not why I was running, but throughout the campaign I kept thinking that if I lost I would be faced with either paying several hundred dollars a month for private health insurance or maybe going back to working for someone else so I could have coverage.”

It was a choice he ultimately didn’t have to make, but Pouliot says he knows several peers who would also like to start their own businesses, or even just get away from jobs they hate, but who are not in a position to risk losing their health care benefits. That connection inspired him to break ranks with his GOP colleagues and support legislation (SB 552) to expand Medicaid under the Affordable Care Act. The measure passed but was ultimately vetoed by Gov. Paul LePage (R) in April.

A self-described moderate, Pouliot says it was just one of several scrapes he had with his party over the last two years. He says his district is pretty evenly split, which made it easier to resist calls to toe the line if it meant voting for something he felt his constituents wouldn’t support.

“I wasn’t sent here just to vote my own ideology, I was sent here to represent my constituents,” he says. “It made it a lot harder to say ‘This is my tribe, the Republican tribe, and I’m just going to stick steadfast to these positions.’”

That’s a typical Millennial response, says O’Connor.

“A lot of these kids are going to create real challenges for leadership,” she says. “They truly lack the willingness to just blindly follow. Some will conform, but many will not.”

Pouliot admits the rifts have “caused me some sleepless nights,” but it hasn’t hurt him politically — he’s running unopposed in this month’s primary. Halfway across the country in Michigan, however, things are playing out a little differently for another Millennial lawmaker, Republican Rep. Frank Foster.

The week in session

States in Regular Session: CA, DC, DE, IL, KS, LA, MA, MI, MO, NC, NH, NJ, NY, OH, PA, PR, RI, SC, US, WI

States in Special Session: AZ “a”, CA “b”, VA “a”

States currently prefilng for 2015 Session: MT

States adjourned in 2014: AK, AL, AR, AZ, CA “a”, CO, CT, DE “b”, FL, GA, HI, IA, ID, IL “a”, IL “b”, IN, KY, MD, ME, MN, MS, MS “a”, MS “b”, NE, NM, OK, OR, PR “a”, PR “b”, SD, TN, UT, VA, VT, WA, WA “a”, WA “b”, WA “c”, WI “c”, WV, WV “a”, WV “b”, WY

Letters indicate special/extraordinary sessions

— Compiled By FELICA CARILLO
(session information current as of 5/29/2014)
Source: State Net database

Although a conservative on most fiscal issues, the 27-year-old Foster — the Chairman of the House Commerce Committee who has already won re-election once and is seen as being primed for a run at a House leadership role — voted earlier this year in favor of expanding Medicaid and has been circulating draft legislation to offer more discrimination protections in housing and employment for LGBT people. That detour from the more hardline GOP platform has drawn him a staunchly conservative primary challenger...who is just 25 years old.

— *By RICH EHISEN*

Editor's note: This is the first in a two-part look at the growing number of Millennial lawmakers now serving in statehouses. Next issue, we will further examine the challenges and opportunities they face and how their efforts will impact their peers inside and out of the political process.

Budget & taxes

S LASHED OIL ESTIMATE THREATENS ‘FRACKING’ IN CA: In 2011, an energy firm hired by the state of California estimated that a 1,750-square-mile rock formation extending from Sacramento to Los Angeles could yield 13.7 billion barrels of oil, based on existing extraction technologies. That projection spurred hopes of an energy boom in the state like those that have boosted the economies of North Dakota and Texas. In fact the University of Southern California forecast last year that the Monterey Shale formation could create up to 2.8 million new jobs and generate as much as \$24.6 billion per year in new tax revenue in California by 2020.

But last month scientists from the U.S. Energy Information Administration issued a report indicating that current extraction methods, including hydraulic fracturing, or “fracking,” would yield only 600 million barrels of oil from the Monterey Shale, 96 percent less than the earlier projection.

“From the information we’ve been able to gather, we’ve not seen evidence that oil extraction in this area is very productive using techniques like fracking,” said John Staub, who led the energy agency’s study.

Staub added that compared with oil production at North Dakota's Bakken Shale formation and the Eagle Ford Shale in Texas, "the Monterey formation is stagnant."

USC economics professor Adam Rose, who coauthored last year's study on the economic impact of the Monterey Shale, called the new estimate "a phenomenal cutback."

"It's amazing in terms of that much refinement in the numbers," he said.

The news had some environmental activists stepping up their calls for California Gov. Jerry Brown (D) and lawmakers to put an end to “fracking” in the state.

“The myth of vast supplies of domestic oil resources and billions in potential revenue from drilling in California by the oil industry has been busted,” said San Francisco billionaire Tom Steyer, founder of the nonprofit group NextGen Climate.

“Our leaders in Sacramento can no longer afford to pin our hopes on the false

promises of a fossil fuel windfall — especially when our state is poised to lead the nation and the world toward a cleaner, more sustainable energy economy.”

Zack Malitz, campaign manager for the San Francisco-based liberal activist group CREDO, likewise, said the new estimate means “there is now no longer any political gain to be had for the governor in supporting fracking and putting our state at risk from water contamination, earthquakes and climate change.”

“He must enact a moratorium,” he said.

But a push for such a ban failed in the state's Legislature last year. And a bill (SB 1132) introduced this year by Sen. Holly Mitchell (D) has failed to make it out of the Senate.

The oil industry, meanwhile, doesn't appear ready to raise the white flag.

“We’ve always been quite clear that there are challenges to producing oil out of the Monterey” Shale that differ from those associated with the formations in North Dakota, Texas and elsewhere, said Tupper Hull, vice president of the Western States

Petroleum Association. “I have every confidence that the oil companies possess the experience and the ability to innovate. If anyone can figure it out, they can figure it out.”

in California.” And Severin Borenstein, director of the University of California Energy Institute, said that although “this is definitely a huge setback to the expansion of oil production in California...I would not at all say the game is over.”

“It is way too early to say that this is the death of fracking in California.

Technology only moves forward, and I am sure there is going to be millions of dollars spent trying to make it better specifically for California because there is so much potential.” (SAN JOSE MERCURY NEWS, LOS ANGELES TIMES, STATE NET)

PA GAMBLING PLAYED OUT? Born only eight years ago, Pennsylvania's gambling industry may already have reached maturity. The state legalized gambling in 2004. Its first two casinos opened in 2006. Four more opened the following year. Another two opened two years after that. And three more opened between 2010 and

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**“It is way too early
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in California.”**

2013, bringing the total to 12. Last year, those gambling facilities generated over \$1.4 billion in tax revenues for the state. But after five consecutive years of growth, the state's gambling revenue curve has flattened.

"We are entering into a slower growth year," said John Colestu, general manager of Mount Airy Casino Resort in the state's Poconos region. "The new norm is just being equal to the previous quarter," he said.

Competition from surrounding states appears to be the culprit. New Jersey has 11 casinos and online gaming. Delaware has three casinos, as well as sports betting and online gaming. Maryland has four casinos. West Virginia has five racinos, a race-track casino and a stand-alone casino. And Ohio has four casinos and four slot-machine facilities at race tracks.

"The Northeast is certainly saturated," said Mount Airy's Colestu.

And his state is about to face a new and even bigger challenger: New York, where voters recently authorized seven commercial casinos — on top of the five tribal casinos and nine racinos already operating in the state.

The next likely step for Pennsylvania will be to develop other gambling revenue sources, like Internet gambling and sports betting, with that conversation already under way in the state's General Assembly, according to Colestu.

"Internet gaming has the best chance of being implemented and successful going forward. From what I've read, legalizing sports betting is a much bigger challenge, an uphill battle," he said. (POCONO RECORD)

BUDGETS IN BRIEF: The U.S. Supreme Court has agreed to hear a challenge to a ruling by **MARYLAND's** highest court that some taxes on out-of-state income are unconstitutional. The challenge was brought by a Maryland business owner and his wife, who allege they were taxed twice on some income (BALTIMORE SUN). • The Internal Revenue Service could impose daily tax penalties on large employers who shift workers into the health care exchanges created under the Affordable Care Act and then make tax-free cash contributions to offset the premiums of that coverage. Some employers have reportedly determined that course of action would be more cost effective than providing coverage to their employees themselves (CALIFORNIA HEALTHLINE). • **MISSOURI's** GOP-controlled Legislature passed a raft of bills on the last day of the session, including tax breaks for country club members, dry cleaners and fast food restaurants, that Gov. Jay Nixon (R) said will cost state and local governments \$776 million. The governor pledged deep budget cuts to offset the lost dollars (ST. LOUIS POST-DISPATCH). • The **MASSACHUSETTS** House approved a \$1.1 billion expansion of the Boston Convention and Exhibition Center. The bill still needs approval from the Senate and Gov. Andrew Cuomo (D) (BOSTON GLOBE). • The **NORTH**

Upcoming stories

Here are some of the topics you may see covered in upcoming issues of the *State Net Capitol Journal*:

- **Millennials in the Legislature, II**
- **Voter ID**
- **Hollywood tax credits**

CAROLINA Senate gave preliminary approval last week for a broad tax bill that includes a provision revoking the authority of municipalities to levy privilege taxes on businesses beginning in July 2015. The House approved a more modest privilege-tax cap, of \$100, the week before, but House members are expected to agree to the Senate's version (NEWS OBSERVER [RALEIGH]). • **OKLAHOMA** Gov. Mary Fallin (R) signed legislation (HB 2562) setting the state's oil and natural gas gross production tax at 2 percent for the first three years of production (NEWS. OK, STATE NET). • **NEW YORK** and **NEW JERSEY** will receive \$2.5 more in Hurricane Sandy relief. The money constitutes the third installment of federal aid from the \$50 billion approved by Congress in early 2013 (NEW YORK TIMES). • The **OHIO** Tax Credit Authority approved tax credits for eight projects — including the relocation of General Electric Co.'s U.S. Global Operations Center to the Cincinnati area — expected to create more than 3,200 jobs (CLEVELAND. COM). • An **ILLINOIS** House panel approved a proposal backed by House Speaker Michael Madigan (D) that would ask voters in November if they support a 3-percent increase in the tax on incomes over \$1 million per year. The millionaire tax ballot measure is only an advisory and wouldn't have the force of law (CHICAGO TRIBUNE). • **NEW HAMPSHIRE** Gov. Maggie Hassan (D) signed into law a 4-cent increase in the state gas tax that will go toward construction and maintenance of state and municipal roads and bridges. The law marks the first time the state's gas tax has been increased in 23 years (WMUR [MANCHESTER], STATE NET). • **MINNESOTA** Gov. Mark Dayton (D) signed off on \$1.17 billion in construction projects expected to create more than 33,000 jobs (STAR TRIBUNE [MINNEAPOLIS]). • **NEW JERSEY** Gov. Chris Christie (R) announced plans to reduce state payments into the public pension system by \$2.43 billion over two years to balance the state's budget (NJ.COM).

— *Compiled by KOREY CLARK*

Politics & leadership

ESTABLISHMENT REPUBLICANS PREVAIL ON ‘SUPER TUESDAY’:

On Tuesday, May 20, six states — Arkansas, Georgia, Idaho, Kentucky, Oregon and Pennsylvania — held primary elections, many of which featured establishment Republicans taking on Tea Party challengers for seats in Congress.

The highest-profile of those contests was in Kentucky, where U.S. Sen. Minority Leader Mitch McConnell faced his first well-financed GOP primary opponent since being elected in 1984. But McConnell easily defeated Tea Party-backed conservative

businessman Matt Bevin, who had claimed McConnell had been too quick to compromise with Democrats. Having successfully fended off the primary challenge from the right, McConnell will now face Democrat Alison Lundergan Grimes in the general election, expected to be the most expensive U.S. Senate race of the year.

In Georgia, Republican voters sent former Dollar General CEO David Perdue and 11-term U.S. Rep. Jack Kingston to a July 22 runoff ahead of two hard-line conservatives also running to fill the state's open U.S. Senate seat. The winner of next month's contest will face Democrat Michelle Nunn, daughter of former U.S. Sen. Sam Nunn. Nunn faced minimal opposition in her primary, garnering 75 percent of the vote.

The races in Georgia and Kentucky are key to the Democrats' chances of holding on to control of the U.S. Senate because they are the only states where the party has hopes of picking up seats currently held by Republicans.

In Oregon's GOP U.S. Senate primary, pediatric neurosurgeon Monica Wehby also defeated a more conservative opponent, state Rep. Jason Conger. And in a Republican U.S. House primary in Idaho, eight-term, center-right U.S. Rep. Mike Simpson fended off a challenge from hard-line conservative Bryan Smith.

The primaries, particularly the McConnell-Bevin race, demonstrated the continued importance of political fundamentals like fund-raising and incumbency, despite the deep voter dissatisfaction voters currently have with Washington. McConnell spent more than \$11 million on the contest compared to Bevin's \$3.3 million. And while Bevin attacked McConnell for having been in Washington too long, McConnell was able to persuade voters not only that his 30 years in the Senate had greatly benefited them but that they stand to gain even more if he becomes U.S. Senate majority leader next year (NEW YORK TIMES, WASHINGTON POST).

Upcoming elections

(5/30/2014 - 6/29/2014)

06/03/2014

Alabama Primary Election

House (All)

Senate (All)

Constitutional Officers: Governor, Lieutenant Governor, Secretary of State, Treasurer, Attorney General, Auditor, Commissioner of Agriculture and Industries

US House (All)

US Senate (Class 2)

California Primary Election

Assembly (All)

Senate (Even)

Constitutional Officers: Governor, Lieutenant Governor, Secretary of State, Treasurer, Attorney General, Controller, Insurance Commissioner, Superintendent of Public Instruction
US House (All)

Iowa Primary Election

House (All)

Senate (Odd)

Constitutional Officers: Governor, Lieutenant Governor, Secretary of State, Treasurer, Attorney General, Auditor, Secretary of Agriculture and Land Stewardship

US House (All)

US Senate (Class 2)

Mississippi Primary Election

US House (All)

US Senate (Class 2)

Montana Primary Election

House (All)

Senate 1, 4, 5, 8, 11-15, 17, 20, 23, 25, 28-32, 35, 39, 40, 42, 44, 48 and 49

US House (All)

US Senate (Class 2)

New Jersey Primary Election

US House (All)

US Senate (Class 2)

New Jersey Special Primary

US House (Congressional District 1)

TEA PARTY TRIUMPHANT IN TX

RUNOFFS: All of last month's GOP primaries didn't go the establishment candidates' way. Tea Party-backed Texas state Sen. Dan Patrick blew past three-time incumbent Lt. Gov. David Dewhurst in a runoff election on May 27 for the latter candidate's post. Patrick's margin of victory was more than 30 percentage points.

"For everyone watching tonight, if you love America, the Constitution, Texas, free markets, the Second Amendment and the liberty that comes from God, welcome to the grassroots of the Republican Party," Patrick told a crowd of supporters.

Patrick will face state Sen. Leticia Van de Putte (D) on Nov. 4.

In another GOP runoff, for attorney general, Tea Party favorite Ken Paxton easily defeated state Rep. Dan Branch. Paxton will face Democrat Sam Houston and Libertarian Jamie Balagia in November. (TEXAS TRIBUNE)

REMAP BATTLE COMES TO FL COURT:

A battle over Florida's congressional districts came to a Tallahassee circuit court last month. The 2012 congressional district map drawn by the Republican-controlled Legislature — which resulted in the GOP winning 17 of the state's 27 districts, while the Democrats had a net gain of three — is being challenged by a coalition of left-leaning groups and individuals led by the League of Women Voters.

The case could be one of the most precedent-setting in the state's history, with the court taking on its new role as overseer of the state's redistricting process as a result of the Fair Districts rules added to the state's Constitution by voters in 2010. Those rules bar lawmakers from drawing maps to benefit themselves or their parties and require new districts to conform to geographic and political boundaries.

"Florida voters said to the Legislature: you get to keep the pen, but we're going to have the court looking over your shoulder," said Justin Levitt, a professor

Upcoming elections (cont.)

(5/30/2014 - 6/29/2014)

New Mexico Primary Election

House (All)

Constitutional Officers: Governor, Lieutenant Governor, Secretary of State, Treasurer, Attorney General, Auditor, Commissioner of Public Lands

US House (All)

US Senate (Class 2)

South Dakota Primary Election

House (All)

Senate (All)

Constitutional Officers: Governor, Lieutenant Governor, Secretary of State, Treasurer, Auditor, Commissioner of School and Public Lands

US House (All)

US Senate (Class 2)

06/10/2014

Arkansas Primary Runoff

House (All)

Senate Districts 3-6, 8-10, 14-15, 17-20, 24, 30-31, 33 and 35

Constitutional Officers: Governor, Lieutenant Governor, Secretary of State, Treasurer, Attorney General, Auditor, Commissioner of State Lands

US House (All)

US Senate (Class 2)

Maine Primary Election

House (All)

Senate (All)

Constitutional Officers: Governor

US House (All)

US Senate (Class 2)

Nevada Primary Election

Assembly (All)

Senate Districts 2, 8-10, 12-14, 16-17, 20-21

Constitutional Officers: Governor, Lieutenant Governor, Secretary of State, Treasurer, Attorney General, Controller

US House (All)

North Dakota Primary Election

House (Odd)

Senate (Odd)

Constitutional Officers: Attorney General, Commissioner of Agriculture, Tax Commissioner

US House (All)

and redistricting expert at Loyola Law School in Los Angeles. “The court didn’t have that role before the constitutional amendments, and part of the trial coming up is going to be how vigorously they take that responsibility.”

The court now has the authority to decide whether the Republicans get to hold on to the existing political boundaries for the rest of the decade or have to draw new ones potentially more favorable to Democrats (MIAMI HERALD).

POLITICS IN BRIEF: The **CALIFORNIA** Senate approved a bill (SB 1443) that would ban gifts from lobbyists and lower the limit on other gifts from \$440 to \$200. The bill is one of several ethics reforms proposed in response to a series of scandals in the state’s Senate, including criminal charges being filed against Democratic Sens. Roderick Wright, Ronald Calderon and Leland Yee (LOS ANGELES TIMES). • **NEW YORK** Gov. Andrew M. Cuomo (D) has named former congresswoman Kathy Hochul to be his running mate in November. Lt. Gov. Robert J. Duffy (D) announced last month that he would not be running for reelection due to back and leg pain he suffered from his extensive travels during the current term (NEW YORK TIMES). • All of **OREGON’S** elected officials are paid less than their immediate subordinates, according to the *Statesman Journal*. Gov. John Kitzhaber (D), for example, makes \$98,600 per year, while his chief of staff, Mike Bonetto, makes \$140,292 a year (STATESMAN JOURNAL [SALEM]). • **MINNESOTA** Secretary of State Mark Ritchie announced last month that state lawmakers will no longer be issued cards granting them immunity from arrest during the legislative session except in cases of “treason, felony and breach of the peace” because there is no law compelling the state to do so. Some have raised concerns that the “Get Out of Jail Free” cards put legislators above the law, allowing them to get out of drunken driving and other arrests (STAR TRIBUNE [MINNEAPOLIS]).

— Compiled by KOREY CLARK

Upcoming elections (cont.)

(5/30/2014 - 6/29/2014)

South Carolina Primary Election

House (All)

Constitutional Officers: Governor, Lieutenant Governor, Secretary of State, Treasurer, Attorney General, Comptroller General, Adjutant General, Commissioner of Agriculture, Superintendent of Education

US House (All)

US Senate (Class 2)

Virginia Primary Election

US House (All)

US Senate (Class 2)

Governors

CORBETT BACKS HYBRID PENSION PROPOSAL IN PA:

Pennsylvania Gov. Tom Corbett (R) announced his support for a new hybrid pension proposal for Keystone State public employees and teachers. The proposal crafted by Corbett’s administration and leaders in the GOP-led House is

aimed at reducing an unfunded liability in the state's pension systems of around \$45 billion. Under that plan, the state's traditional pensions for the Public School Employees' Retirement System and State Employees' Retirement System would be closed to most new hires, with those workers enrolled instead in a combination of limited defined-benefit pensions and 401(k)-style accounts.

Rep. Mike Tobash (R), who sponsored the proposal, said it was just "step one" in reducing annual taxpayer contributions that could exceed \$600 million in the year that starts July 1. He called the current pension circumstances "a crisis situation."

Corbett had previously offered his own plan he said would reduce the liability by \$12 billion over 30 years, but it drew only tepid support from lawmakers. An actuary hired by lawmakers to review the new proposal said it would save the state approximately \$11.2 billion over 30 years.

The pension issue has come to the forefront this year as the state is facing a \$1.3 billion budget shortfall. Charles Zogby, Corbett's budget secretary, said that without reforming the pension system to reduce the required employer contribution the governor will have to consider raising taxes to cover the shortfall.

But unions impacted by the proposal countered that it would do nothing to positively impact this year's budget deficit. They also pointed to a conclusion from the lawmakers' own actuary that said, "For new employees the loss of retirement security is greater than the value of the cost savings for the commonwealth. They not only take on the investment and longevity risk, but lose the value of risk pooling." (PITTSBURGH POST-GAZETTE, DAILY LOCAL NEWS [WEST CHESTER])

SHUMLIN, MALLOY SIGN EARLY EDUCATION BILLS: Vermont Gov. Pete Shumlin (D) and Connecticut Gov. Dannel P. Malloy (D) each signed bills last week to ensure more young children have access to publicly funded pre-kindergarten education. The measure Shumlin signed will allow every 3- and 4-year-old in the Green Mountain State to access at least 10 hours a week of pre-kindergarten instruction. The measure also contains a provision that allows the funding to follow a child from their home school district to another one should their parent work outside of the home school district. The measure Malloy signed will grow the state-funded program to allow an additional 1,020 children ages 3 to 5 to attend, beginning in 2015. (BURLINGTON FREE PRESS, NEW HAVEN REGISTER, BRIDGEPORT NEWS)

MCAULIFFE VETOES GIFT BAN: Virginia Gov. Terry McAuliffe (D) vetoed legislation unanimously approved by lawmakers that would have barred him from accepting or soliciting donations from anyone seeking grants from the Governor's Opportunity Fund, an economic-development fund he controls. The \$35 million fund provides companies with cash grants and loans for maintaining or creating jobs in the Old Dominion. McAuliffe had unsuccessfully tried to have lawmakers amend the bill to include themselves in the ban, noting that while he administers the fund they

control its funding. Bill author Del. James L. LeMunyon (R) said he will reintroduce the measure next year. (WASHINGTON POST, TRICITIES.COM [BRISTOL])

GOVERNORS IN BRIEF: Soon to be termed-out **NEBRASKA** Gov. Dave Heineman (R) announced he will apply to become the president of the University of Nebraska system. The public revelation irked some members of the university's search committee, who complained it would discourage some qualified candidates from applying for the job. Heineman's term ends in November (OMAHA WORLD-HERALD). • **OHIO** Gov. John Kasich (R) said he will sign SB 150, which would impose new agricultural regulations in an effort to combat large algal blooms plaguing Lake Erie and other Buckeye State waterways. The bill passed both houses unanimously (CLEVELAND PLAIN DEALER).

— Compiled by RICH EHISEN

Hot issues

BUSINESS: The **CALIFORNIA** Senate rejects SB 1381, which would have required foods containing genetically modified organisms (GMOs) to be labeled accordingly (SACRAMENTO BEE). • Still in **CALIFORNIA**, the Senate endorses SB 1000, which requires sugary drinks to contain a warning label on the packaging. It moves to the Assembly (SACRAMENTO BEE). • Staying in **CALIFORNIA**, the Senate approves SB 935, which raise the Golden State minimum wage to \$13 per hour by 2017, with hikes thereafter linked to inflation. It moves to the Assembly (SAN FRANCISCO CHRONICLE). • The **CALIFORNIA** Assembly approves ABB 1522, which would require employers to provide workers with a minimum of three paid sick leave days a year. It moves to the Senate (SACRAMENTO BEE). • **OKLAHOMA** Gov. Mary Fallin (R) signs HB 2372, which makes the Sooner State the fourth this year to bar employers from requiring workers to provide access to their social media accounts as a condition of employment (OKLAHOMAN [OKLAHOMA CITY]). • **HAWAII** Gov. Neil Abercrombie (D) signs SB 2609, which will incrementally raise the minimum wage to \$10.10 by Jan. 1 2018. The Aloha State becomes the fifth, along with the District of Columbia, to raise its minimum wage this year (REUTERS, NATIONAL CONFERENCE OF STATE LEGISLATURES, HAWAII GOVERNOR'S OFFICE). • **COLORADO** Gov. John Hickenlooper (D) signs HB 1366, which requires the Department of Revenue to ensure that marijuana-infused edible products themselves, not just their packages, are "clearly identifiable" as marijuana products (9NEWS.COM [AURORA]). • Also in **COLORADO**, Gov. Hickenlooper signs HB-1361,

a bill that limits purchasers of retail marijuana to the equivalent of up to 1 ounce of dry, loose-leaf marijuana per transaction (9NEWS.COM [AURORA]). • **IOWA** Gov. Terry Branstad (R) signs HB 2109, legislation that bars the sale of electronic cigarettes and other alternative nicotine products to minors (WATERLOO CEDAR FALLS COURIER). • **LOUISIANA** Gov. Bobby Jindal (R) signs HB 746, legislation that bars minors from using tanning beds in Pelican State salons (STATE NET, SHREVEPORT TIMES). • **MICHIGAN** Gov. Rick Snyder (R) signs SB 934, legislation that raises the Wolverine State minimum wage for workers 18 and older to \$9.25 per hour by 2018. Workers under 18 must be paid at least 85 percent of the new minimum standard (DETROIT NEWS, MICHIGAN GOVERNOR'S OFFICE).

In case you missed it

A series of state and federal courts have slowed the steady march toward stricter voter identification requirements. But it is too early to know what impact those legal decisions will have.

In case you missed it, the story can be found on our Web site at

http://www.statenet.com/capitol_journal/05-19-2014/html#sncj_spotlight

CRIME & PUNISHMENT: The **GEORGIA** Supreme Court upholds a Peach State law that allows corrections officials to keep secret the lethal injection cocktail used to execute condemned prisoners. The court ruled that keeping the drug's providers and composition private would prevent the supplier from facing protests and ensure the supply remains readily available (NBCNEWS.COM). • **IOWA** Gov. Terry Branstad (R) signs HB 2289, which bars state or local law enforcement authorities from using unmanned aerial vehicles for traffic enforcement and requires police to obtain a warrant before using drones to obtain evidence in an investigation (WATERLOO CEDAR FALLS COURIER). • The **CALIFORNIA** Senate approves SB 1135, which would ban Golden State prisons from sterilizing inmates for purposes of birth control. It moves to the Assembly (SACRAMENTO BEE). • Also in **CALIFORNIA**, the Senate approves SB 1010, a bill that would make sentences for trafficking in powder cocaine equal to those of rock cocaine. Supporters argue that current law unfairly punishes rock cocaine users, who they say tend to be predominantly black or Hispanic, with longer sentences. It moves to the Assembly (CBS2.COM [LOS ANGELES]). • The U.S. Supreme Court rules that a **FLORIDA** law which sets an IQ test score of 70 as a minimum in determining eligibility for the death penalty is unconstitutional. The court said the law violates the norms of psychiatry and could lead to the execution of prisoners with intellectual disabilities (WUSF NEWS [UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH FLORIDA]).

EDUCATION: The **OKLAHOMA** Legislature overrides Gov. Mary Fallin's (R) veto of HB 2625, a measure that allows third grade students who fail a basic reading test to still advance to the fourth grade if a team of educators and parents agree to it. The bill goes into effect immediately (OKLAHOMAN [OKLAHOMA CITY]). • The **RHODE ISLAND** House approves HB 7096, a measure that would cut back the number of evaluations teachers rated "highly effective" and "effective" would receive

to once every four years and once every three years, respectively. It moves to the Senate (PROVIDENCE JOURNAL). • The **CALIFORNIA** Senate approves SB 1263, legislation that would bar charter schools from locating outside of the district where they are chartered. It moves to the Assembly (SANTA CLARITA VALLEY SIGNAL).

ENVIRONMENT: The **OHIO** House approves SB 310, legislation that would impose a two-year freeze on standards that apply to electric utilities for renewable energy and energy efficiency and end a requirement that utilities purchase half of their renewable energy from within the state. The bill moves to Gov. John KASICH (R), who has indicated he will sign it (COLUMBUS DISPATCH). • The **CALIFORNIA** Senate rejects SB 1132, a measure that would have imposed a moratorium on hydraulic fracturing, or fracking, in the Golden State (SACRAMENTO BEE).

HEALTH & SCIENCE: The **MISSOURI** Legislature gives final approval to SB 508, which would require criminal background checks for people applying for state licenses to help consumers sign up for health insurance through a federally run website. It moves to Gov. Jay Nixon (D) for review (INSURANCE JOURNAL). • **MINNESOTA** Gov. Mark Dayton (D) signs HB 2446, a bill that gives the Gopher State Board of Pharmacy cease and desist authority to prevent the sale of synthetic drugs (INSURANCENEWS.NET). • The **INDIANA** Board of Pharmacy bans the use or sale of four compounds used in making synthetic drugs that mimic the effects of marijuana or cocaine. The ban goes into effect in late June (INDIANAPOLIS STAR). • The **NEW YORK** Assembly approves AB 6357, legislation that would legalize the use of marijuana for medical purposes. The bill moves to the Senate, which is considering its own medical pot measure, SB 4406, which is in committee (POST-STANDARD [SYRACUSE]). • **MINNESOTA** Gov. Mark Dayton (D) signs SB 2470, legislation that legalizes the use of marijuana for treatment of some medical conditions, including cancer and other terminal and some chronic diseases, and seizures in children with epilepsy (MINNEAPOLIS STAR TRIBUNE, STATE NET). • The **CALIFORNIA** Assembly rejects AB 1894, which would have created a state entity to regulate and license the state's medical marijuana industry (SACRAMENTO BEE).

In the hopper

At any given time, State Net tracks tens of thousands of bills in all 50 states, the US Congress and the District of Columbia. Here's a snapshot of what's in the legislative works:

Number of 2014 Prefiles last week: 237

Number of 2015 Prefiles last week: 1

Number of Intros last week: 967

Number of Enacted/Adopted last week: 589

Number of 2014 Prefiles to date: 21,427

Number of 2015 Prefiles to date: 139

Number of 2014 Intros to date: 76,191

Number of 2013 Session Enacted/Adopted overall to date: 40,747

Number of 2014 Session Enacted/Adopted overall to date: 19,803

Number of bills currently in State Net Database: 165,412

— Compiled By FELICIA CARILLO
(measures current as of 5/29/2014)
Source: State Net database

IMMIGRATION: The LOUISIANA Senate approves HB 907, which would make it optional for Pelican State residents to obtain a driver's license that conforms to federal Real ID standards. Beginning in 2016, air travel and access to many federal buildings will require the federally-approved identification. The bill returns to the House (ADVOCATE [BATON ROUGE]).

SOCIAL POLICY: A federal judge rules that an **OREGON** law barring same-sex marriages is unconstitutional. The U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals for the 9th District rejected a request by the National Organization for Marriage to halt U.S. District Judge Michael McShane's ruling (PORTLAND OREGONIAN). • **MARYLAND** Gov. Martin O'Malley (D) signs SB 212, legislation that prohibits discrimination against transgender residents in housing and employment in the Old Line State (BALTIMORE SUN). • **NEW JERSEY** Gov. Chris Christie (R) signs SB 873, legislation that will allow adoptees or specific heirs and relatives to access their birth records. The new law goes into effect in 2017 (USA TODAY).

POTPOURRI: The **CALIFORNIA** Assembly endorses AB 1576, a bill that would require actors in adult films to wear condoms or some other protective equipment. The measure, which would also require actors to be regularly tested for sexually transmitted diseases, moves to the Senate (STATE NET).

— *Compiled by RICH EHISEN*

Once around the statehouse lightly

DEFINITELY NOT FOR SALE: He may be gone, but disgraced former Illinois Gov. Rod Blagojevich is in no way forgotten. Evidence to that comes in the form of legislation lawmakers recently endorsed allowing them to donate items once used by then-state Senator Barack Obama during his days in Springfield to his future presidential library. But as the *Chicago Tribune* reports, legislators were mindful to ensure the items would be loaned or donated to the facility, not sold. Senate President John Cullerton urged his colleagues to remember how trying to sell Obama's U.S. Senate seat — the position in Congress, not his actual chair — went for Blagojevich. The former gov is now serving a 14-year sentence in federal prison for that inspired bit of larceny.

UNCOMMON LOGIC: There has been more than a little controversy of late over the Common Core Standards that the majority of states signed onto in 2010. Opponents have sprung up from all sides: some teachers don't like the emphasis on testing, some lawmakers see it as just more federal intervention into issues best handled locally, yada, yada, yada. But for true hysteria, we direct you to Florida, where Rep. Charles Van Zant sees something particularly insidious behind Common Core. As *Think Progress* reports — and video backs up — Van Zant recently told folks gathered at an anti-Common Core event that the real intent of the program, which was the brainchild of state education officials and the National Governors Association, is to “attract every one of your children to become as homosexual as they possibly can.” And here we thought it was just about reading, writing and arithmetic. Hooo boy!

REAGAN REDUX: Noted anti-tax trumpet Grover Norquist — he of the infamous “no new taxes” pledge that has locked down thousands of GOP lawmakers over the years — wants to name 3,000 public items nationwide in honor of former President Ronald Reagan. This effort is hardly new, and usually annoys the heck out of Dems. But recently one of their own standard bearers may have come around. As the *Sacramento Bee* reports, California Democratic Party Chairman John Burton sent Norquist a letter commending him for his efforts. The irascible Burton, tongue firmly in check, noted that he was in the Golden State legislature “when Ronald was governor and I fondly remember his signing the largest tax increase in the more than hundred year history of our state.” Burton further noted that Reagan had signed legislation liberalizing abortion and thanked Norquist for wanting to honor someone “who has such a liberal progressive record.” Norquist called Burton’s letter “childish.”

SHE LOVES ROCK & ROLL: Put another dime in the jukebox, baby, because South Carolina Gov. Nikki Haley is getting her rock on! As Columbia's *The State* newspaper reports, Haley recently got to meet Joan Jett, a pioneer of women in hard rock and one of three people the gov has said she has always wanted to sit down with for a chat. Haley and her hubby were in New York City for a Republican Governors Association meeting, and managed to finagle a lunch date with her hero, whom Haley will occasionally quote on her Facebook page. Good thing it worked out. The other two folks on Haley's list are former Gov. Carroll Campbell and former British Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher. Both are deceased.

— *By RICH EHISEN*



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